

AccessAble Help Desk Pro Edition – version 2007 Preview

While I still have a long way to go with the new release, I thought I would stop and give those who are interested a preview of some of the changes for the next version – along with reasons for the modifications.

I have included fields in addition to Location and Department for Buildings and Rooms. While it may be enough for most organizations to be able to report on users, their computers, peripherals and software by just Location and Departments others may find these additional fields useful. Are a large number of network connectivity issues coming from a particular building or room? If so, this may indicate power problems or wiring issues. Planning a relocation of a group of users from one building to another? If so it may be helpful to print reports showing the assets by building and room.

An additional equipment status field has been added for computers and peripherals. This may be useful when a computer is being repaired, or an item is only on loan. Etc.

The screenshot shows a dialog box titled "Record Will Be Changed (1)". It contains several input fields and dropdown menus. The fields are: ID (1), Assigned (John Doe), Location (Georgia), Department (Human Resources), Building (Administration Building), Room (John's Office), Status (Awaiting Repair), Asset ID (123123), Serial (213213), and Manufacturer (IBM). A yellow callout box points to the Room field with the text "New in 2007". The dialog has tabs for "1) Computer", "2) Computer (cont.)", "3) Computer (cont. 2)", and "4) Computer (cont. 3)". At the bottom, there are buttons for "Software", "OK", and "Cancel".

Changes to the screen designs are also being made since I may have made some screens too large for smaller resolutions (I don't recommend 640 X 480, but I realize many may use 800 X 600). In some version I had included tabs with user related records from other tables on a notebook style tab on the same update form. In the next release, access to these related files will be from pushbuttons that will launch the appropriate browse screen.

The screenshot shows a Windows-style dialog box titled "Record Will Be Changed (John Doe)". It features four tabs: "1) User Information", "2) Contact Information", "3) Servers and Logins", and "4) Network Info and Notes". The "User Information" tab is selected. The form contains the following fields and values:

- ID: 2
- Full Name: John Doe
- Last Name: Doe
- First Name: John
- Web Login: john
- Web Password: doe
- SecLevel: 1
- Department: Human Resources (dropdown)
- Location: Georgia (dropdown)
- Building: Related Records (dropdown)
- Room: John's Office (dropdown)

At the bottom of the dialog, there are five buttons: "Peripherals", "Computers", "Requests", "OK", and "Cancel".

The next version will continue to use an end user's full name as the lookup field for speeding data entry for other files, but I have added first name and last name fields. Some may find this helpful. Also, most users will only need to use the "location" field from the locations table, however, in the next version I am adding address, city, state, zip and phone number field for those that will use it. This may also be helpful in speeding data entry for users. If you set up locations with these additional fields they can be used to quickly add the same values when adding a user record and selecting their location.

The Requests screen has some changes as well. Many times the same action is taken to satisfy a common problem. This may be to Install Hardware or Install Software or Reset a Password – maybe a somewhat longer solution that is still frequently used. In order to save some typing, I am including a button on the request update screen to let you quickly pick one of these common solutions. Also, the vast majority of times a request may be handled only once and is resolved. However, I have had some write to me that they often have to revisit a problem more than once in order to finally resolve it. Currently these customers have been using the Notes field to record these additional actions on a single request. In the next release I am providing a related table to record additional or subsequent activity related to a single request or problem.

Record Will Be Changed

1) Request Details 2) Contact Info 3) Completion Info 4) Notes 5) Request History

ID: 3,303

Request Date: 12/12/2006

Requester: John Doe

Priority: Normal

Category: Installation

Status: Complete

Type: Software

Details: This is a sample support request. Example: install AccessAble Help Desk Pro Edition 2007 software.

Action: ... Install and test software

Buttons: Complete! Email It! Print OK Cancel

I am making changes throughout the program, some my idea, most suggestions from others. I will not be able to please everyone, but the more input I have from licensed users, or potential customers, the better chance I have of satisfying more of you. I had one customer ask about a table for recording inventory of wireless devices (cell phones, Blackberries, etc) but I haven't decided to do that yet. I would guess most would record this (if they do) as peripherals but I would be glad to hear from others who might see the value in this table more than I do right now. Email me at dbandsons@aol.com with any comments, suggestions, or requests that you may have. Check back as I may add more about the next version soon.